



AETC News Clips

Randolph AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 02 Aug 05

Military court denies deadline extension in Air Force Academy rape trial

08/01/2005

By JUDITH KOHLER / Associated Press

A high-profile rape case stemming from the Air Force Academy's sexual assault scandal appeared dead Monday after a military court refused to grant prosecutors an extension for an appeal.

The decision drew fire from Jennifer Bier, a civilian therapist who was threatened with jail time after she refused to surrender records of her sessions with a former client — one of two women who accused 1st Lt. Joseph Harding of sexually assaulting them while all were attending the academy near Colorado Springs.

The judge in the case, Col. David Brash, shelved the rape charge against Harding in June because Bier wouldn't hand over the records. Brash said the trial could continue on a charge of indecent assault, but that was halted pending an appeal of the decision involving the rape count.

Prosecutors, however, missed the deadline and a three-judge panel of an Air Force court rejected their request for more time Friday. Michael Briggs, a spokesman at Randolph Air Force Base near San Antonio, where the prosecutors are based, said the Air Force will ask the panel or the full court to reconsider the decision.

"I am totally appalled," Bier said.

She said she had feared the Air Force would try to quietly drop the case that grew out of the academy's 2003 assault scandal, which prompted several investigations and toppled the school's top four commanders.

"It appears that's exactly what they did," Bier said.

Boston attorney Wendy Murphy, who represents Bier, said prosecutors can appeal the ruling to the appeals court for the armed forces. She asked prosecutors in a letter to do that.

Murphy, a professor at Boston's New England School of Law, called last week's 2-1 ruling by the Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals "a stunner." She said prosecutors filed notice that they planned to appeal the decision on the rape charge, but missed a July 15 deadline for transferring records to the higher court.

San Antonio Express News

PAGE:

POSTED: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Randolph AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 02 Aug 05

"I've never heard of a court not granting someone extra time to assemble the record," Murphy said.

Prosecutors said they needed more time because of the large number of documents. Two of the appeals judges, however, responded that prosecutors didn't explain why they missed the deadline to request an extension.

Murphy said she called and e-mailed prosecutors as the deadline neared and got no response. She said this was the last of the academy sexual assault cases and none has resulted in convictions.

"That speaks volumes," Murphy said. She said thinks the El Paso County district attorney should prosecute sexual assault cases involving the academy, rather than leaving it to the military.

Also left unresolved is whether a military court can subpoena a civilian. Harding's lawyers argued that their client's right to a fair trial trumped the privacy rights of alleged victim Jessica Brakey, who has agreed to have her named used publicly.

Brakey's allegations helped spark the scandal at the academy. Dozens of women said they were punished or ignored when they reported being sexually assaulted.

"I think this sends the message to cadets that they can't have private conversations with their therapists and have justice," Bier said.

Harding, a pilot trainee stationed at Columbus AFB, Miss., is accused of raping Brakey in 2000 and assaulting the other cadet in 1999.

Some of those subpoenaed in the case turned over records to Brash. Bier refused to release records of her sessions with Brakey, saying they were confidential and protected by state law.

Brash at one point issued an arrest warrant for Bier, who was never arrested

San Antonio Express News

PAGE:

POSTED: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Randolph AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 02 Aug 05

Bush says he'll approve BRAC, vows to work with Congress on immigration

Web Posted: 08/02/2005 12:00 AM CDT

Gary Martin
Express-News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — President Bush said Monday he will work with congressional leaders this fall to pass an immigration reform bill that includes a guest-worker program and measures to tighten security along the U.S.-Mexico border.

"I think we can get immigration reform done," Bush told Texas newspaper reporters during a White House interview in the Roosevelt Room.

The president also said he will accept the final recommendations of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, which is reviewing Pentagon proposals to close or adjust the missions of hundreds of U.S. military installations.

"In order for the process to be nonpolitical, it's very important to make it clear that the decision of BRAC will stand, as far as I am concerned," Bush said.

Bush made the comments during a wide-ranging interview as he prepared to leave for a monthlong vacation at his 1,600-acre Prairie Chapel Ranch near Crawford.

In a flurry of activity on his last day in Washington, Bush invoked constitutional authority to bypass the Senate and make a recess appointment of John Bolton to be ambassador of the United Nations.

Bush defended his decision and said it would not poison the atmosphere with the Senate.

"First of all, the majority of senators would have voted for his confirmation," Bush said. "Bolton's standing in the world depends upon my confidence in Bolton. I've got a lot of confidence in Bolton."

The president also defended political strategist Karl Rove, whose name has surfaced in a 19-month investigation by special prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald, who is trying to determine who leaked a CIA operative's name to the media.

Rove and other White House officials have been identified as talking to reporters about the agent.

"Karl has my complete confidence. He is a valuable member of my team, and when Mr. Fitzgerald completes his investigation we will all know the facts," Bush said.

The Senate is considering two immigration reform bills that would add thousands of new border patrol agents, create tamper-proof identification cards and build new holding cells to house undocumented immigrants.

Both bills include guest-worker provisions, but they differ substantially.

San Antonio Express News

PAGE:

POSTED: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Randolph AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 02 Aug 05

Legislation filed by Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz., would allow guest workers to work for two years in the United States, then force them to return to their home country for a year, a cycle that could be repeated three times.

That bill does not offer a new avenue to citizenship.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., introduced legislation that would call for undocumented immigrants to pay a fine and back taxes but allow them to apply for guest-worker status and, eventually, citizenship.

Bush has not endorsed either proposal but said he will work with lawmakers to craft legislation to address the complex problems surrounding immigration reform.

"Our first step was to find out exactly what was on the minds of the bills' sponsors," Bush said. "We've got our opinions on a variety of subjects and we will try to work it out this fall with the members of the Senate."

After that, Bush said he will work with House leaders, and reiterated House Speaker Dennis Hastert's assertion that an immigration reform bill can be passed this year.

However, he said, "This should not be an amnesty program. If a person wants to become a citizen, he has to get in line. In other words, you cannot leapfrog an already existing line.

"If Congress is interested in enhancing, or making it easier for someone to become a citizen, the way to do that is to increase the number of people under different country quotas."

Concerning the president's pledge to accept the BRAC recommendations, the panel is scheduled to vote later this month on the Pentagon's proposals. It must submit its recommendations to Bush by Sept. 8 and to Congress by Sept. 23.

"I'm going to accept their recommendations, as presented to me," Bush said.

The Pentagon has proposed closing 33 major installations, including four in Texas, to save \$48.8 billion over the next 20 years. Hundreds of other facilities would be realigned.

Texas installations slated for closure are Brooks City-Base in San Antonio, Naval Station Ingleside and the Lone Star Ammunition Plant and Red River Army Depot, both in Texarkana.

Among installations facing realignments are Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Sheppard AFB at Wichita Falls and Corpus Christi Naval Air Station.

Bush also expressed confidence that the Senate will move quickly to confirm John Roberts to the Supreme Court.

"John Roberts is going to be on the Supreme Court, hopefully, in an expeditious manner," he said.

San Antonio Express News

PAGE:

POSTED: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Randolph AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 02 Aug 05

Bush's schedule this week includes a speech Wednesday in Grapevine to the American Legislative Exchange Council, a conservative-leaning group made up of Republican and Democratic lawmakers and business officials.

On Thursday, Colombian President Alvaro Uribe is to meet with Bush at the ranch. The Bush administration is supporting Uribe's efforts to combat violence by leftist guerillas tied to the narcotics trade and by right-wing paramilitary groups.

One thing Bush said he will not do during his visit home is get involved in the looming gubernatorial primary battle between Gov. Rick Perry and Carole Keeton Strayhorn, whose son is White House spokesman Scott McClellan.

"I held a high position in Texas at one time in my life and I have made it clear to all parties that I am not going to get involved in the race," Bush said.

"They are both friends."

San Antonio Express News

PAGE:

POSTED: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

AFIT Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **02 Aug 05**

AFIT supporters expect large crowd for rally

By [Timothy R. Gaffney](#)
Dayton Daily News

DAYTON | — Organizers of a rally for local military installations expect busloads of sign-toting supporters at Stebbins High School today when two members of the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission visit, a spokesman said Monday.

"My sense is that it's going to be big," said Evan Scott, spokesman for the Dayton Development Coalition, but he couldn't estimate how many people will show up.

"It's truly a beast of its own at this point," he said.

The rally, scheduled for 3 to 5 p.m., is to show local support for the threatened Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Two commission members, Samuel Skinner and retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd "Fig" Newton, are to tour the AFIT campus from 1 to 4 p.m. The commission has put AFIT in its gunsights for possible privatization or relocation, along with the Naval Postgraduate School and the Defense Language Institute, both in Monterey, Calif.

Following the campus tour, they're to visit Stebbins for a meeting with elected officials and community leaders.

The meeting will include lawmakers from local congressional districts, Ohio Gov. Bob Taft, local university presidents and community leaders including members of the coalition's BRAC task force, Scott said.

Scott said the coalition organized the rally at the urging of Greene County Commission President Marilyn Reid. The coalition printed a flier promoting the rally, and other political and business leaders spread the word via e-mail.

Scott said local employers have chartered buses and urged employees to go.

AFIT is the Air Force's graduate school of engineering and management and its center for technical professional continuing education. It employs about 500 faculty and staff members and has nearly 1,000 resident graduate students. Beyond its payroll, it's also a part of the region's technical brain trust.

The city of Kettering was also mustering volunteers to show support for the Defense Finance and Accounting Office, Scott said.

Kettering would lose 425 jobs under the Defense Department proposal to consolidate it and 25 other DFAS offices into three locations.

The commission has questioned the Pentagon's plan for consolidating DFAS. Skinner and Newton are to tour the Columbus DFAS center, one of the three DFAS locations that would gain jobs under the plan, before touring AFIT.

Contact Timothy Gaffney at 225-2390.

Find this article at: <http://www.daytondailynews.com/localnews/content/localnews/daily/0802afit.html>

Air Force Times

PAGE:

DATE: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

AFIT Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **02 Aug 05**

Rep. Hobson says BRAC report full of errors

By Samantha Sommer
Springfield News-Sun

The Base Realignment and Closure recommendations are full of errors, U.S. Rep. David Hobson said.

"I can't believe the number of mistakes in all of this stuff," the Springfield Republican said. "They had 2½ years to do this, and the mistakes are very amateur."

Hobson spoke to the Springfield Rotary Club on Monday about the BRAC process and other topics. The Springfield Air National Guard Base was listed for realignment in the Pentagon's BRAC report. That means the F-16 jets plus 291 direct and 149 indirect jobs from the pilot training unit could leave.

The BRAC commissioners are reviewing the recommendations and will forward their suggestions to the president in September.

Hobson and other local officials want to persuade commissioners to leave the Springfield base alone. They have combed the Pentagon's report, finding multiple errors. The planes are scheduled to fly out in 2010. Some jobs are slated to leave in 2007 and pilots will head there for training in 2008.

"That just doesn't make sense," Hobson said.

Since 1983, more than \$76 million has been spent to upgrade the base, including several new buildings. The move will cost about \$11.4 million, and projected savings are between \$700,000 and \$900,000 annually — but it will take 17 years to realize that. In previous BRAC rounds, Hobson said the savings had to meet a certain threshold to be put in place.

Hobson also doesn't believe the move will generate any savings and is drafting a letter to commissioners explaining that. The letter also will detail that more F-16 pilots will need to be trained. "We'll also show that by the number of pilots they projected they will need, they are going to have to leave this base the way it is," he said.

The BRAC commissioners also added to the list the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Columbus and the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Hobson will meet with commissioners today as they tour those facilities.

The base closure report also contained errors on those installations. Buildings and information after 2003 weren't included, Hobson said, such as a new \$13 million building at AFIT.

"If you are getting a little concerned about your taxpayer dollars, you should," he said.

The Pentagon also didn't look at an independent study of the technology institute from the late 1990s that looked at its cost effectiveness.

The BRAC commissioners and staff members understand, Hobson said.

"The commission has done very well," he said.

Hobson also took questions and reviewed what he has been working on. He helped secure \$30.4 million for Rickenbacker Airport in Columbus for a new intermodal rail facility. That will increase the transit of goods and freight by air, rail and truck and could create up to 20,000 jobs. "It is going to be one of the major economic driving forces in this part of the country," Hobson said.

Reach Samantha Sommer at ssommer@coxohio.com

Air Force Times

PAGE:

DATE: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

AFIT Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **02 Aug 05**

Miami Valley Prepares To Do Battle To Save Military Jobs

WHIOtv.com

The Miami Valley is preparing to do battle in the fight to save military jobs.

Supporters of Wright Patterson Air Force Base are putting on a show of support.

It will come Tuesday just as two members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are scheduled to visit.

Supporters of the base want to show those commissioners just what Wright Patt and one of its major programs mean to the local community.

That program, Air Force Institute of Technology otherwise known as AFIT, focuses on advanced education and research in engineering.

Its future could mean the loss of 1,500 jobs.

Greene County Commission President Marilyn Reid and others are organizing a community show of support set for Tuesday afternoon at Stebbins High School.

By the time the commissioners arrive, supporters hope to have hundreds of people at the event with banners, signs and T-shirts showing their support.

Mad River Superintendent Alex Dinno said it will be the first ever use of the new high school.

He said keeping AFIT open is important to the future of the district and local families and that 40 percent of their students are military- dependent children and they want BRAC to know that area schools are great supporters of military families.

Organizers said if you'd like to join the show of support, they are gathering at the school at 3 p.m. Tuesday.



Copyright 2005 by WHIOTV.com.

Air Force Times

PAGE:

DATE: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Laughlin AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 02 Aug 05

DEL RIO NEWS HERALD

Laughlin's 'Talons' chasing the future

[By Bill Sontag](#)

Published July 31, 2005, p. 1

Of three species of trainer aircraft at Laughlin Air Force Base, the most aggressively pursued by student pilots is the T-38 "Talon." An assigned seat in the T-38 means a student is on the fighter/bomber track, the hot pursuit and ordinance delivery systems of Air Force combat sorties.

But the T-38C model is replacing the still functioning T-38A, the mainstay of Laughlin fighter/bomber training for 40 years. Far more than just a name change, the conversion heralds important changes in aircraft performance, training regimes, and routine maintenance.

Smoothing out the ripples and waves of this sea change transition is Philip D. Pulliam, T-38 aircraft maintenance division chief in the 47th Flying Training Wing. Friday, Pulliam joked about his experience and professional tenure, both likely assets for the task at hand.

"You know you've worked for the Air Force too long when most of the bases you've worked at are now closed, and most of the aircraft you've repaired are on static display at the main gate," Pulliam quipped.

Two antiquated features of the T-38A model propelled the conversions now performing splendidly on the C model. Avionics, a contraction of "aviation electronics," on the T-38C have brought the jet into the computer and digital age. And a more advanced propulsion system has given the "Talon" more thrust and power.

Both features amply mimic and more realistically approximate the same characteristics of the jets for which students are being prepared, such as the F-15 "Strike Eagle," the F-16 "Falcon," both fighters, and the B-1 "Lancer" and B-2 "Spirit" bombers.

The familiar, needle-sharp silhouette of the T-38 airframe first appeared with a design and production run of 1,000 in 1961. Then, the "Talons" were built to train pilots for what the Air Force called "the century series," F-100s, F-102s, F-104s and F-105s. Now, half of those original T-38s are still deployed in the Air Force's inventory, and the newest airframe in use was built in 1972.

So versatile a performer is the T-38 that the Air Force concluded updating is a satisfactory solution to its technological shortcomings. And the investment is not slight. The avionics transition costs \$1.2 million per aircraft, and it's matched by the \$1.2 million investment in a new propulsion package for each "Talon."

Upgrade activities are geographically split, with avionics changed out at Mesa, Ariz., on what was once Williams Air Force Base before its closure. The "propulsion modernization program" (PMP) engine changes are effected at Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio, home of the Air Force Air Education and Training Command, of which Laughlin is a component.

Avionics improvements are neatly, if incompletely, summarized by transitions from analog equipment and dials to digital sensors and displays. Avionics instruments include computers, navigation aids, steering and control instruments, and performance indicators of velocity and altitude data.

"The T-38A has all analog systems," Pulliam explained, "and none of the fighters and bombers they

Del Rio News

PAGE:

ISSUE DATE: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Laughlin AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 02 Aug 05

(students) are going to have that system anymore.”

Pulliam described the analog cockpit as filled with gyroscopes, dials and gauges receiving information from gear and mechanical systems. Not ropes-and-pulleys, exactly, but nearly that technologically distant from the digital information and displays now standard equipment on the T-38C, still backed up, in part, with analog equipment.

The new cockpit avionics also include VHF, “very high frequency” radios, still accompanied by UHF, “ultra high frequency” equipment. A compass is still present, but the new “C” model has a GPS, “global positioning system,” on board.

A salient improvement, according to Pulliam is the “heads-up” instrument display. Now, thanks to new technologies, pilots can see their instruments without looking at them. Two glass rectangles, perched above the instrument panel, in the pilot’s line-of-sight through the windshield, digitally display readings where pilots are already looking. The head-bob, from windshield to instrument panel and back, is obviated.

The avionics process in Mesa, Ariz. requires four to six weeks. “We’ll be done with that part in September,” said Pulliam.

“More power!” The pilot’s answer to Tim-the-Tool-Man’s growled prayer is the propulsion modernization program. The PMP is equally sophisticated to the avionics upgrade, but with a result of more thrust, rather than easier communications from and to the pilot.

With improved ignition, a longer-life combustor, a spooled compressor, and an upgraded exhaust system, the T-38 C’s engine offers 19 percent more thrust than it’s older cousin, the “A” model. And all this, Pulliam said, with no overall change in fuel consumption.

More than just the engine, Pulliam said, the PMP dramatically redesigned the intake, front, of the power plant, and the ejector, business end, where thrust for the aircraft is pushed to the rear.

When first designed, the T-38 was “a very light aircraft,” Pulliam said. Over the years, magnesium parts were replaced with aluminum, and worn-out aluminum, with steel. Overall, the aircraft put on an unwanted, but necessary 862 pounds. The weight growth impacted performance, and sorties were sometimes cancelled, Pulliam said, because of the added safety liabilities caused by Del Rio’s summer heat.

Thanks to the added thrust of new PMP-modified engines, heat is a lesser concern, and Laughlin runways do not need extensions to get T-38s off the ground safely, according to Pulliam.

The irony of the conversions of both avionics and propulsion is that a change in fuel types added 100 pounds of weight to a ready-to-fly T-38, but avionic changes from analog to digital created even more weight loss. As a result, bricks of ballast were necessarily riveted to fuselage nose compartments and nose wheel wells, adding about 124 pounds.

Fifty-nine Laughlin T-38s have completed the “C” model transformation, and are up-and-running at the base now. Nineteen more are still either at Mesa or Randolph. By June 2006, all of Pulliam’s birds will be home to roost, training young pilots.

Monday: Maintaining the new airborne momentum

Del Rio News

PAGE:

ISSUE DATE: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Laughlin AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 02 Aug 05

DEL RIO NEWS HERALD

Director has 2020 vision for T-38C

[By Bill Sontag](#)

Published August 1, 2005, p. 1

The T-38 fighter/bomber training jet at Laughlin Air Force Base has an impressive service life of more than four decades.

But upgrades in avionics and engine capabilities, while long overdue, are underway. And beyond those critical improvements, more changes are coming.

Philip Pulliam, maintenance director for the T-38 fleet at Laughlin, oversees the care-and-feeding of each of the 78 jets in his inventory when they return from their transformations from the T-38A model to the T-38C.

All the improvements in electrical and computer systems are performed at Mesa, Ariz., and the increased get-up-and-go for new engines is installed at Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio.

With these come new challenges for Pulliam and his staff of managers, technicians and mechanics.

Guided by Boeing Company specialists and technicians who trained the Laughlin mechanics, the T-38 maintenance division pored over the first three T-38C "Talons" that arrived here a year ago.

Though the airframes looked pretty much the same, they're not the same jets that left here, coming home with digital instrumentation and a "heads up" display in the cockpit.

Moreover, the arriving upgraded T-38C engines have 19 percent more thrust, returning the jet to its rated speed of 812 miles-per-hour.

Acceleration to the advertised speed was eroded and much retarded by the added weight of 40 years of repairs, beefed up to combat fatigued metal, according to Pulliam.

To become accustomed to the dramatic changes, no one flew the first trio of "Talons" for three months. They became static laboratories and classroom instructional aids for Pulliam and his staff.

The next phase of training for the T-38 mechanics and technicians, continuing under the tutelage of Boeing technicians, was evaluation of the avionics systems and components during the first sorties.

"This is a software-driven airplane now," said Pulliam, emphasizing a sharp point of contrast with the nearly obsolete "A" model.

As proof, upgrades of software are still coming in to heighten the "Talon's" training potential. Pending software and "firmware" (permanently stored, coded instruction) upgrades called "Block 4" will be installed this month, said Pulliam.

As before, the new materials will be installed simultaneously in the base's sophisticated training simulators.

Del Rio News

PAGE:

ISSUE DATE: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Laughlin AFB, Texas



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 02 Aug 05

The advances in technology will enable better air-to-ground combat training, according to experts in the 416th Flight Test Squadron at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

Tim Kang, project engineer, said in April, "The Block 4 will also improve mission planning, postflight analysis and enhance uploading and downloading mission data. These upgrades are among many Block 4 upgrades that will continue to establish T-38C as the main trainer for the Air Force."

The T-38C engine upgrades will be watched closely, too, but procedures may be streamlined by two characteristics liberally tossed around regarding many parts of the new powerhouse: Greatly reduced incidence of fatigue cracking, and reduction of component pieces. The jet's J85 spooled compressor rotor is an example, boasting a 10:1 reduction of "parts count." This, in part, accounts for a 300 percent increase in engine life, and a 5:1 reduction in staff time to maintain it, Pulliam said.

The afterburner liner has fewer than 100 parts, compared to the previous engine's 800 or more pieces. Durability of the engine's afterburner liner is "6 times better," too, according to Boeing data sheets.

Two additional, important upgrades are on tap for the T-38C, according to Pulliam.

The jets currently have old, outdated braking systems. "They work depending on how hard the pilot can step on the pedals, just like the old days when we didn't have power brakes." In the development pipeline now are anti-skid, 3,000-pounds-per-square-inch power brakes.

In addition, the T-38C will soon be strapped on by pilots in more powerful ejection seats, the life-saving device no pilot ever hopes to use. The Martin-Baker Aircraft Company, specialists in systems to propel cockpit canopies and pilots away from damaged jets, has designed a "zero altitude, zero airspeed" T-38 ejection seat.

That means that a pilot in a motionless aircraft on the ground, can be thrust upward, after the canopy is blown free, high enough to deploy a parachute and land safely. The same capability is already found in the T-6 "Texan II" trainer, also in use at Laughlin.

The transition to the T-38C "Talon" is nearly complete at Laughlin, further illustrating the base's importance to the Air Force's massive aircraft training responsibilities. Along the way, training the trainers and maintenance division technicians proved smooth, but time consuming.

Laughlin's maintenance personnel collaborate in a training and professionalization effort called the "Grow Your Own Program," for students at Del Rio High School. Participants hired to help with introduction of the new-and-better T-38C were very important and instrumental in the transition, Pulliam said.

A final flyover of T-38A "Talons" will roar above the crowd of graduates, friends, family members and Laughlin personnel during the retreat ceremony for the Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 05-13, the last batch of student pilots to earn their silver wings in the retiring jet.

Pulliam aims to ensure that the upgraded Laughlin trainer jets remain reliable, more sustainable. He calls the T-38C "simpler, safer and easier to maintain."

"We want to keep the T-38s flying at least until 2020," Pulliam said.

Del Rio News

PAGE:

ISSUE DATE: 02 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 2 Aug 05

Road warriors patrolled Iraq

Luke squad describes convoy duty

By David Madrid
The Arizona Republic

They are stories told all too often: car bombings in Iraq, ambushes, shootings, improvised explosive devices blowing everyone around them to smithereens.

Members of the Luke Air Force Base 56th Logistics Readiness Squadron, the most deployed squadron at Luke, have been in the midst of the attacks and have returned to tell their stories.

Convoy duty is dangerous work, second only to combat.

The airmen protect the convoys, which means they have to navigate booby traps set up in the most ingenious ways.

Take Staff Sgt. Erik Valenzuela, 24, from Houston. An improvised explosive device, called an IED, blew his tires.

"One night, it was the same checkpoint we always go to ... I'll tell you what, you have no time to react to something like that," Valenzuela, a Surprise resident, said.

He was standing in the gun turret armed with an M-4 carbine, and his gunner was armed with an assault rifle. When approaching a checkpoint, standard operating procedure is to not drive too fast so the rest of the convoy can catch up.

"I knew whereabouts we would get hit, so I tell the driver: 'Go ahead and speed up. Go ahead and floor it.'"

Unfortunately, it was the driver's first time driving in a convoy. An IED exploded.

"I saw the detonation," Valenzuela said. The bomb went off under the left rear tire.

"You hear the boom, and before you know what happened, you're blown off to the side of the road," he said. "At the time, I didn't know how many flat tires we had. I'm yelling at my driver to keep going. Finally, we get out of the kill zone far enough and my truck won't operate anymore."

All of the tires were flat, and the truck's axle was shattered.

"For me, that was just a total experience," Valenzuela said. "I think about it every day, how lucky I am, how lucky my gunner was. A piece of shrapnel went off my gunner's helmet. Missions like that will change you."

Most of the squadron was assigned to the 494th Light Medium Truck Company, 17th Combat Support Battalion, in Mosul, northern Iraq.

They deployed in July 2004 and returned in January.

The Arizona Republic

PAGE:

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 2 Aug 05

They agree that convoy duty is "absolutely dangerous." They never knew what to expect, except to expect to be attacked.

"We provided convoy security," said Master Sgt. Stephen Brook, 46, an Avondale resident from Huddersfield, England. "These drivers were on contract to KBR, the company that has contracts to provide logistical support to the Army. We basically provided the protection for those convoys. So there were civilian trucks, with civil-

ian drivers with military escorts."

KBR is Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root.

The methods of attack the convoys encounter are varied. They can be IEDs, small-arms fire, rocket-propelled grenades or land mines.

The members would drive to the Turkish border and then escort drivers from all over the world to deliver food, fuel and other supplies.

Staff Sgt. Jason Dustin, 29, of Houston, said that it is also dangerous on the base.

"The first four months we were there, it was constant mortar attacks day and night," Dustin, a Glendale resident, said.

"One night, it was constant, 13 attacks in a row," said Staff Sgt. Franklin Smoak, 26, who is from Summerville, S.C. and currently lives in Goodyear. "They just launched them one after another. Normally, it's a couple of pops here and there. They throw three or four at us and then they're gone. That night, I guess they were just feeling a little bit braver."

During one attack, a mortar round landed on one side of Brook and then another on the other side of him. Normally, he said, nobody ran when the mortar rounds were lobbed into the base because of the frequency of the attacks.

The Arizona Republic

PAGE:

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 2 Aug 05

"I probably broke the three-minute mile that time," he said.

"There was one (mortar round) that landed about 50 feet in front of me," said Senior Airman Yvonne Tijerina, 22, an Avondale resident from Simmern, Germany. "I had been walking by myself to the gym. The mortar landed, and they thought I had gotten hit or something. They came out and started searching for me with a spotlight. I was hiding behind a truck and ran back. My ears hurt, and I got a headache."

Brook said one bomb that the insurgents use is made of phosphorus and is covered with mustard or ketchup on top to keep the air off it.

"When the phosphorus goes off, this stuff just flies at the trucks," Brook said. "The mustard and the ketchup enables it (phosphorus) to stick to the truck. As soon as the phosphorus is exposed to the air, it starts to burn, and you can't put it out until it burns itself out."

Sometimes, the insurgents will place a jug of gasoline next to the bomb just for added effect and destruction.

Other times, the insurgents will add ball bearings to a bomb. Those ball bearings will go through just about anything, the airmen said.

The IEDs are hidden in the most creative places, such as empty watermelons, inside carcasses of animals, in the garbage that lies all around or in abandoned vehicles.

Once on a convoy, Senior Airman Eric Nowakowski, 21, of Chicago, said the convoy encountered a small black rock that resembled a hockey puck.

"It was an anti-tank mine," Nowakowski said. Explosive specialists disabled the mine.

Brook said that Iraqis are told to stay away from convoys, yet some don't or will continue on even after being told to stop in their own language.

Some of the airmen said they had to shoot people who tried to pass or get into the convoy.

The Arizona Republic

PAGE:

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 2 Aug 05



A gun truck assigned to the Luke detachment was stuck by an improvised explosive device. The truck was later repaired and put back into service. Two of the three people in the truck received Purple Hearts. A convoy stops for an IED found ahead of it. First Lt. Brady Smith (below) waits to begin another trip.



The Arizona Republic

PAGE:

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 2 Aug 05



This armored Humvee hit a land mine en route to Mosul. No one aboard was seriously wounded.



A light medium tactical vehicle was hit by an IED, but none of the people aboard the armored truck was wounded.



A private cargo truck burns after being hit by an IED. Iraqis quickly arrived to steal anything they could while the truck burned.

The Arizona Republic

PAGE:

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. 2 Aug 05

Combat lifesaver comes to driver's rescue

By David Madrid
The Arizona Republic

Luke Air Force Base Staff Sgt. Franklin Smoak was a combat lifesaver on convoy duty in Iraq when he faced the strange case of the almost-severed foot.

Convoy combat lifesavers are trained to give limited medical treatment and intravenous injections and to carry wounded people out of bad situations.

The 26-year-old Goodyear resident was in a convoy when five Turkish drivers meted out their own unique justice for a rear-end accident.

"It was in our convoy, and one of the drivers hit the rear end of another driver," said Smoak, from Summerville, S.C.

"I guess it's customary that if you drive into the back of a driver in Turkey, they lop your foot off. So (five) of the guys grabbed this guy and cut his foot off."

— Franklin Smoak Staff sergeant

"I guess it's customary that if you drive into the back of a driver in Turkey, they lop your foot off. So (five) of the guys grabbed this guy and cut his foot off."

Smoak propped the guy up, gave him an IV and called in a medical evacuation unit.

Master Sgt. Stephen Brook, 46, an Avondale resident from Huddersfield, England, said the incident occurred in one of his convoys. Brook said a lot of the private trucks in the con-

voys are family-owned and very clannish.

"When the one truck ran into the back of the other one, a group of five Turkish drivers did not like the guy who ran into the back of them, so they literally grabbed the man and proceeded to chop off the offending foot that had caused the accident," Brook said. "We're protecting these guys from the bad guys, and they're trying to chop each other's feet off and do harm to each other."

The only thing holding the foot on when Smoak got to the driver was a piece of skin, he said. The other drivers had tried to saw the foot off with a knife.

When the truck drivers saw the airmen approach, they scattered, and the only information the airmen could get out of the victim was the license plate number of the truck he hit.

The airmen reported the incident, and the members of the victim's truck-driving group dropped out of the convoy.

Smoak and Brook belong to the 56th Logistics Readiness Squadron.

Reach the reporter at david.madrid@arizonarepublic.com or (602) 444-6926.

Share your 'Service story'

If you're a veteran, an active-duty member of the armed services, a current or former civilian worker or a family member, share your anecdotes of military life with Life at Luke.

E-mail your memories to lifeatluke@arizonarepublic.com, along with a photo of yourself, or mail them to Life at Luke, Arizona Republic Arrowhead Bureau, 17235 N. 75th Ave., Suite A-100, Glendale, AZ 85308-0884.

Get in touch with 'Life at Luke'

■ "Life at Luke" is a weekly page covering Luke Air Force Base, Arizona's other military facilities, plus topics of interest to service personnel, family members and veterans.

■ If you have a tip or story idea, please send it to lifeatluke@arizonarepublic.com or contact editor Vinton Supplee at vinton.supplee@arizonarepublic.com or (602) 444-6922 or reporter David Madrid at david.madrid@arizonarepublic.com or (602) 444-6926.

azcentral.com

■ Find more stories about Luke at luke.azcentral.com.

The Arizona Republic

PAGE:

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

Call to action over witchcraft

To the editor

For the past several months, I have been attempting to halt the witchcraft classes that are being conducted at Luke Air Force Base at taxpayers expense.

Senators John Kyl and John McCain have both "passed the buck" to Col. Meyer in the office of the Inspector General at Luke AFB. Col. Meyer has, to date, ignored my letters while informing Sen. Kyl that he had written to me.

I never received any correspondence. None of these gentlemen seem to see anything wrong with teaching witchcraft on our Air Force base facilities.

I urge other concerned citizens to write to Col. Meyer at Luke AFB in an effort to halt such an outrageous practice. I find it hard to believe that first, our government has disintegrated to such a degree that such things are permitted and second, that the citizens of these United States have become so complacent as to permit its government such conduct.

Does anyone out there care anymore? If you do, join with me in voicing your disapproval.

As Edmund Burke once stated "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is that good men do nothing."

Delia Thibodeau
Buckeye



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**



EXCLUSIVE REPORTS

From the July 29, 2005 print edition

Land swap proposed for Luke AFB

[Mike Sunnucks](#)

The Business Journal

A land swap deal to trade federally owned parcels in the far West Valley for private property next to Luke Air Force Base soon will be put forward in Washington and could involve as many as 6,000 acres.

Arizona Sen. John McCain and Glendale Congressman Trent Franks are putting together a land exchange plan that would swap parcels near Luke for other valuable West Valley real estate away from the military installation.

The McCain-Franks plan will be introduced soon in Washington, D.C., in hopes of final approval from Congress and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management next year.

Details of the land swap are being worked out, but it will entail trading federally owned land near the planned Loop 303 freeway, the White Tank Mountains and possibly Lake Pleasant in the West Valley for private land owned by developers near Luke.

Encroaching projects are a major operational and safety concern for the Glendale military base, and lawmakers want to swap the land to protect Luke from possible closure in the future.

Luke is not on the latest list of bases slated for closure by the Pentagon, which is looking to streamline facilities.

The deal calls for the Bureau of Land Management to take over the private parcels adjacent to Luke, thus maintaining low-density development near the base.

Over the past couple of years, Franks, McCain and Sen. Jon Kyl got Congress to allocate \$27 million for land swaps and other real estate moves to stem encroaching development around the base.

"This exchange presents a wonderful opportunity to provide just compensation to landowners while also protecting and preserving the long-term future of Luke Air Force Base from encroachment without using additional taxpayer dollars," said Franks, who represents most of the West Valley as well as Kingman.

Franks has made Luke protection a top priority since first being elected to Congress in 2002. Kyl and other members of the local congressional delegation are expected to sign on to the McCain-Franks plan after it is introduced on Capitol Hill.

The Business Journal

PAGE: Internet

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Luke AFB, Ariz.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

Lisa Atkins, president of Fighter Country Partnership, a West Valley Luke advocacy group, welcomes the land swap effort.

"The land swap would be an additional way to balance (West Valley) growth and the mission requirements around Luke," said Atkins, who served as chief of staff to late Congressman Bob Stump and currently co-chairs a state commission charged with protecting Arizona bases from closure.

Atkins said land exchanges and zoning protections will help the long-term viability of Luke, and the federal government should pursue swapping real estate assets with developers.

State and local officials also have imposed zoning restrictions aimed at protecting Luke's perimeter from developments that negatively would impact the base.

The state government has put \$9.6 million toward possible real estate transactions aimed at base protection. However, major concerns remain that continued West Valley development jeopardizes Luke's future.

McCain and Franks -- both Republicans -- are in discussions with the federal land agency, base officials and developers regarding the land-swap deal.

Some Phoenix area business and political consultants are assisting with the negotiations.

Don Rinehart, president of the Glendale Chamber of Commerce, said he has not received specific details of the McCain-Franks plan, but is aware that it is in the works and he is optimistic it will help protect the base.

The city of Glendale wants to annex just under 22,000 acres that are near Luke and include portions along the planned Loop 303, however, the city of El Mirage is challenging the move in court as the West Valley suburbs jockey for the valuable land.

Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs has said she favors commercial development such as offices and retail on the land along the planned freeway, a move that could generate up to \$20 million annually in sales tax revenue for the city if it successfully annexes the property.

Atkins, who lost to Franks in the 2002 GOP congressional primary, said Luke-related land exchanges are helped by the fact that the federal government owns significant acreage in the state, including areas west of Phoenix.

As the Valley's western suburbs grow, some of those outlying federal holdings are gaining interest from developers.

"Why not utilize the concept of using federal assets to protect other federal assets?" Atkins asked.



AETC News Clips

Vance AFB, Okla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

Vance chief goes from the streets to the fast track

7/30/2005

By Jeff Mullin

As part of his duties, new Vance Air Force Base Command Chief Master Sgt. James Suttles sometimes has to counsel a young airman on the cusp between a successful Air Force career and washing out.

When he does, he pulls out the first performance report done on another young airman. This report said the airman in question couldn't adapt to military life and should not be retained in the Air Force.

"I read a few lines, and I say, 'Who do you think this is?'" said Suttles. "And of course, they don't know."

Suttles knows all too well, of course. That troubled young airman in the damning performance report was him.

"I say, 'Here's the difference between me and you,'" said Suttles. "When I got this report, I turned around. I made a conscious decision to change. I now knew what was expected of me, and I made the decision to do the right thing. You are now sitting where I was over 20 years ago. What are you going to do? It's still not too late."

Suttles turned his career around, he said, because he had a boss who believed in him. In turn, as the top enlisted man at Vance, he believes any airman can turn himself around.

"I'm not quick to throw an airman away," said Suttles. "It is much easier for us as a service to resolve these airmen's issues, to fix these issues, than it is to try to hire, and replace another troop."

After nearly being booted from the Air Force, Suttles was named Airman of the Year just a year later. In all, he has 12 Outstanding Airman of the Year ribbons.

Suttles' biggest comeback was from a life on the streets of East Los Angeles. When he was 16, his mother took off, leaving him to fend for himself. His father was away in the Army, and Suttles had no relationship with him. So he fended for himself, going to school in the morning and working from noon until 11:30 p.m. to be able to live.

One of his jobs was in a convalescent home. At mealtime, when his patients had finished eating, Suttles would eat the food left on their trays.

"I remember going to bed hungry, most of my life, wearing my grandfather's hand-me-down clothes," said Suttles. "It was tough. I could not see beyond the next couple of days."

Finally, to survive, he joined the Air Force in 1980. By 1983, he was a member of President Ronald Reagan's Medical Support Team based at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

Enid News & Eagle

PAGE: Internet

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Vance AFB, Okla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

One Thanksgiving, he was on duty when the phone rang.

“It was Ed Meese,” said Suttles. At the time, Meese, who would go on to become attorney general, was one of Reagan’s top advisers. “And he says, ‘Airman, the president of the United States would like to know if you would like to have Thanksgiving dinner with him.’ Well, you know what my answer was.”

Suttles was nervous in the presence of his commander in chief but was struck by how ordinary the Western White House was.

“That’s how President Reagan was,” said Suttles. “He preferred the ordinary, the commonplace. He really wasn’t into the bells and whistles.”

One day Reagan rode up on his horse, dismounted and walked over to Suttles.

“He gets off, he walks up and he says, ‘Airman Suttles, how are you doing?’” said Suttles.

The chief said his mouth dropped and he couldn’t stop his leg from shaking, but he managed to snap off a “million-dollar salute,” and the president shook his hand.

Suttles’ career has taken him from the presence of a president to looking for POWs and MIAs in the jungles of Laos, conducting covert anti-narcoterrorism operations in the jungles of Colombia and manning a radar site in Turkey.

“I’ve been so fortunate that I feel like I’ve had two or three careers in one,” said Suttles.

And now his career has brought him to Vance to supervise the base’s 370 enlisted personnel. He and his wife, Debbie; 13-year-old son, Ethan; and 10-year-old daughter, Emily, have been here about two weeks. His first impressions of the base and community have been good ones.

The family moved themselves from their last home at Maxwell AFB in Alabama, where Suttles was superintendent of the 42nd Medical Group. Their first day in Enid, they returned their rented trailer. They were late turning the trailer in, and there was a problem with the documentation.

“The person there said, ‘Don’t worry about it. I promise you everything will be OK,’” said Suttles. He admits being skeptical, but when he returned the next day, all the problems were solved.

He thought that might have been a fluke. Then, the Suttleses began looking for a new truck and went to a local car dealership. A salesman approached.

“He said, ‘Even if you don’t buy a car from me, is there anything I can do to help you get settled here in town?’” said Suttles. “He starts trying to resolve some minor issues we were working through. That speaks to the character of the people who are in this town.”

In his 24-year military career, Suttles said, he has never seen the relationship between a base and city that exists between Enid and Vance.

“People in Enid and folks on this base are incredibly kind,” he said. “They are thoughtful. They are generous. They really, truly care for each other.”

Enid News & Eagle

PAGE: Internet

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Vance AFB, Okla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

One of a command chief's concerns is how enlisted personnel are treated in the community nearest the base at which they serve. That is not an issue, he said, at Vance.

"When you look at the people programs, which is primarily my responsibility, and you realize the city is doing a tremendous job for Vance and our people programs, it is truly hard to put a polish on something that already has a high gloss," said Suttles.

Suttles' office is decorated with mementos of his career, including a performance report for a young airman whom he turned around, and who calls him every time he earns a promotion.

An encased flag, however, is his proudest possession. That was the flag on the coffin of his father, with whom he finally established a relationship after entering the Air Force.



AETC News Clips

Vance AFB, Okla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

Flying squadrons set for ORI scrutiny

7/31/2005

By Jeff Mullin

Maj. Pedro Trinidad normally spends his time preparing young men and women to fly tankers or transports at Vance Air Force Base.

But for the past several months, he has been working to prepare the 32nd Flying Training Squadron for the Operational Readiness Inspection that begins Aug. 14.

Trinidad, the senior instructor pilot in the squadron, has been working with the ORI Preparation Team on getting ready for the biennial inspection.

Beginning in January, Trinidad and other squadron representatives tagged along on ORI inspections at other bases, to "Get an idea of how the current ORI process is running," he said.

"We brought back real feedback to the squadron, to be able to say 'Here's how the inspectors are operating. These are the things that are important in the eyes of the inspection team,'" said Trinidad.

That feedback, he said, helped the squadron do a self-assessment and make any necessary changes.

"Then, from there, we have been building a program to ensure compliance with all the governing guidance out there," he said, "We're making sure if there's any old programs that they get a fresh look."

The next step, he said, is "Educating our people that this is how they want things run and getting them in synch with those requirements and building a training program to kind of get us all peaked and performing at our best when the ORI team does come here."

During the inspection, members of the Inspector General team from Air Education and Training Command headquarters at Randolph AFB in San Antonio will observe every aspect of life in the flying training squadrons, both on the ground and in the air.

"They will not only be observing how we conduct business from student training to instructor training," said Trinidad, "they'll also be evaluating our instructor force."

Inspectors will sit in with students and their instructors as they go through pre-mission briefings, then will take the instructors' place in the cockpit, in part to evaluate the instruction the students are receiving.

"They'll also fly with students with the purpose of comparing the students' performance on the flight with their documented performance," said Maj. Stephen Mollick, director of ORI Preparation Center at Vance, "to validate how we are grading our students."

Enid News & Eagle

PAGE: Internet

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Vance AFB, Okla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

Actually, the flying the inspectors do comprises a large portion of the rating the squadron will receive at the end of the inspection, Mollick said. Those possible grades are outstanding, excellent, satisfactory, marginal and unsatisfactory.

“They will pretty much come and stand over your shoulder while you are running the flying program,” said Trinidad.

The inspectors who evaluate the flying squadrons are veteran pilots, said Trinidad.

“They have many, many years in the command,” he said.



AETC News Clips

Vance AFB, Okla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

ORI team gets Vance's 'house' in order

7/31/2005

By Jeff Mullin

Air Force Maj. Stephen Mollick is getting ready to sell a house.

Not really, but that's the way Mollick, director of Operational Readiness Inspection Preparation Center at Vance Air Force Base, is approaching the intense scrutiny the base will receive next month.

"You want everything to be just right," Mollick said. "You want to fix the things that are broken — if you've got bad plumbing, you get the plumbing fixed. You want to put a little bit of an investment into improving a particular area that's going to give you the best return when you sell your house."

Vance's inspection, held every two years at all Air Force bases, will be Aug. 14-19. A team of some 120, both military and civilian, will spend that week scrutinizing every aspect of life at Vance.

"Obviously they can't look at every detail of what we do," said Mollick, "but they look for a broad cross-section, especially focusing on mission impact areas."

The Inspector General team will come to Vance from Air Education and Training Command headquarters at Randolph AFB in San Antonio.

The team members will scour Vance making sure personnel are complying with Air Force instructions and Department of Defense regulations. They also will look for things Vance does well, and areas in which there can be improvement.

Nothing will escape the inspection team's scrutiny, from how Vance trains pilots to the appearance of the grounds.

"All in all they really don't leave any stone un-turned," said ORI preparation team member Capt. Craig Lowery.

"They don't miss a thing," said Mollick. "If somebody walks out to their car without their hat on (a violation of Air Force regulations), some inspector's going to see it, and it's going to show up on their report."

Inspectors won't limit their scope simply to the base. They will meet with local leaders and conduct random conversations with local people about Vance's role in the community.

Each unit will receive a grade, ranging from outstanding to unsatisfactory. Then the base as a whole will receive an overall grade at a final briefing Aug. 23.

Enid News & Eagle

PAGE: Internet

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Vance AFB, Okla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

“The overall purpose of the inspection is not to simply just grade our base,” said Lowery, “but it’s to allow the IG team to evaluate and measure our ability as an installation to conduct our wartime mission and any contingency operations that may arise.”

Vance never has received anything lower than an excellent, the second-highest designation. No bases in the AETC, of which Vance is a part, have ever received a grade of outstanding.

“It’s different here at Vance than it is at other bases,” said Bob Farrell, Vance’s chief of community relations and a retired senior noncommissioned officer, “At other bases if you get an excellent, folks really get kind of excited. There’s too many type A personalities and achievers here. They don’t get excited unless there’s an outstanding.”

Needless to say, everyone strives for an outstanding rating, but nobody wants to receive anything lower than an excellent.

“There’s a sense of pride in what they do on a daily basis,” said Mollick. “I don’t think anybody is really doing much different for the inspection. I would expect they wouldn’t have to. I feel the quality of everything I’ve seen on this base from the day I arrived has been excellent or above.”

Inspectors, all of whom are experts in their fields, will conduct interviews with Vance personnel, as well as look over their shoulders as they do their jobs. Some members of the IG team even will fly training missions with Vance students.

“They are looking to teach us,” said Mollick, “and look for areas where we can improve quality, reduce costs or improve efficiency.”

Unscheduled exercises will be a vital part of the inspection. Mollick warned these exercises could limit access to the base and some base services from time to time during the inspection period.

“Anything that impacts the mission, good or bad, will be weighed more heavily than items that don’t impact the mission,” said Mollick. “The mission’s more than just flying airplanes, it’s whatever that organization’s primary job is.”

Mollick and his 30-member team have been preparing for the inspection since last October.

They began by asking the base’s various departments to do a self-assessment in January, then to look for deficiencies or areas that could be improved. Then the focus turned to how to best present this information to the inspectors.

“What we’re working on now is polishing up the presentation, how we’re going to present what we’ve done to the inspectors,” said Mollick, “and sprucing up base appearance and facilities here and there.”

The ORI process has been going on for more than 50 years. In the 1955 Jimmy Stewart film “Strategic Air Command,” an unannounced ORI is part of the plot. The inspections used to be unannounced, but now everyone gets plenty of notice.

Enid News & Eagle

PAGE: Internet

DATE: 2 Aug 05



AETC News Clips

Vance AFB, Okla.



News Clips are compiled for the AETC Commander and staff by AETC/PA. Copyright restrictions apply. **2 Aug 05**

“Now we’ve gone to these notices that are a year out,” said Farrell. “Is that good or is that bad? It’s really good because it gives people a lot of time to prep, in areas that probably won’t be inspected. You don’t know what the inspectors are going to look for, you get everything ready.”

Pre-inspection checklists are posted on the Inspector General’s Web site, so bases have an idea what the inspection team will be looking for.

Mollick already has a good idea what to expect. He was part of the IG team inspecting Vance during the last two ORIs, in 2001 and 2003.

Enid News & Eagle

PAGE: Internet

DATE: 2 Aug 05